

Tawas Area Schools
Reorganizational and Regular Board of Education Meeting
January 15, 2024

The reorganizational and regular meeting of the Tawas Area Board of Education was called to order by Superintendent Klinger at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 15, 2024 in the boardroom at the administration office.

Mr. Klinger led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present: Lentz, Ulman, Jenkins, Edmonds, Bruning, Klenow
Absent: None
Tardy: Butzin

Administrators Present: Klinger, Danek, Livingston, Tiffany, Clouse

POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Mr. Klinger said the positive highlight for tonight was a tour of the updates made to the Clara Bolen gym. Members of the board met prior to the board meeting to visit the facility and look at all of the recent upgrades that have been completed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Mr. Klinger asked if there were any public comments on agenda or non-agenda items. He explained that public comment is limited to 3 minutes and stated that the board does not participate in 2-way communication with the public during this time.

Mr. Ed Beckley was present at the meeting and stated that he was there to address a FERPA violation that took place involving his granddaughter. He explained that there was a man who entered the school and took a video in the school office, later posting this video to YouTube under the name M-55 Audit. In the video, he said you can hear his granddaughter talking with Mr. Livingston about her IEP. He was there because he was under the impression that the man responsible for this video would be in attendance, but he was not there so Mr. Beckley just wanted to say that school is doing a great job and did everything right on their end.

Mr. Butzin arrived to the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Klinger indicated that board officers need to be selected for the calendar year. He called for nominations for President. Mrs. Jenkins made a motion to nominate Jennifer Bruning for President, supported by Klenow. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Bruning took over the meeting.

President Bruning called for nominations for Vice President. Motion by Butzin, supported by Lentz to nominate Julie Ulman for Vice-President. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously.

President Bruning called for nominations for Secretary. Motion by Jenkins, supported by Edmonds to nominate Shannon Klenow for Secretary. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously.

President Bruning called for nominations for Treasurer. Motion by Klenow, supported by Jenkins to nominate Ami Edmonds for Treasurer. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Ulman, support by Klenow to approve the consent agenda items which included the approval of the December 11, 2023 regular and closed session minutes and the January 10, 2024 special meeting minutes. It also included the payment of bills as follows: the monthly contractual and prepaid expenses for the general fund in the amount of \$1,327,309.78 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$107,620.90. There were no sinking fund bills to be paid. It also included payment of presented bills for the general fund in the amount of \$22,874.48 and for the sinking fund in the amount of \$15,000.00. Letters of resignation/retirement from Jeannette Freytag, educational assistant, Tracy Willard, high school kitchen worker, Alison Hollies, school social worker, Wendi Paulson, Title I teacher, and Kandra Cousins, educational assistant, were also approved. Motion carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Klinger said that January is School Board Recognition Month. He said our school board members are elected officials performing public service. He thanked them for their support and dedication to Tawas Area Schools, its students, staff and the programs provided. He said their commitment to the district is appreciated. He noted their years of service as follows: Amy Jenkins, 1 year; Tracee Lentz and Mike Butzin, 3 years; Ami Edmonds, 3.5 years; Jennifer Bruning, 5 years; Julie Ulman, 7 years; Shannon Klenow 9 years. He presented each of them with a certificate of appreciation.

Mr. Klinger said Mrs. Clouse is recommending Mrs. Jerri Ureel be hired as a special education secretary. Mrs. Ureel has a bachelor's degree in political science and is a bar certified legal assistant from Oakland University. She has several years of experience as an administrative assistant and coordinator at the college level and was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Klenow, support by Butzin to hire Jerri Ureel as a special education secretary. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said Mrs. Clouse is recommending Mrs. Jacqueline Adams be hired as a title I educational assistant. Mrs. Adams has several years of experience owning and operating her own daycare center and was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Klenow, support by Jenkins to hire Jacqueline Adams as a title I educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Athletic director, Jonathan Mejeur is recommending the following spring coaches for hire: Shane Plank for varsity baseball; Justin Ulman for J.V. baseball; Marcus Doan for varsity softball; Adrienne Dittenbir for girls' soccer; Paul Vainer for boys' golf; Scott Jorasz for boys' head track; Chris Lerczak for boys' assistant track; Brianna Griffiths for girls' head track; Aaron Hazen for girls' assistant track; Jenifer Caldwell for 7th grade track and Kaelene Horn for 8th grade track. The J.V. softball position is still currently vacant. Motion by Klenow, support by Jenkins to hire the spring coaches, with the exception of Justin Ulman who will be voted on separately, as presented by athletic director Jonathan Mejeur. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Lentz, support by Jenkins to hire Justin Ulman as the J.V. baseball coach. Yes: Klenow, Butzin, Edmonds, Jenkins, Lentz, Bruning. Abstain: Ulman. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports Mr. Klinger said that the policy committee met on December 19, 2023 to review new and revised bylaws and policies after meeting with the school's NEOLA representative. Tonight's meeting is to be considered a first reading. The bylaws and policies that were reviewed included board powers (0122) and staff reductions/recalls (3131). Mr. Klinger explained that these revisions are required to stay compliant with the law, which will go into effect on February 13, 2024. They need to be adopted prior to that date. This is a first reading and no action was necessary.

Legislative Report – Mr. Klinger stated that the revenue conference was held last week. Revenue estimates are generally up compared to what the economists thought last May, however, the overall increases in revenue have slowed significantly from the last few years. Even though the estimates are higher than expected, student pupil counts are projected to continue to decline at the district level over the next few years.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Klinger said that at the last meeting the board had asked him to go back to Mr. Lichota and see if there is a need for another new bus, in addition to the one that was approved in December. In response to this, Mr. Lichota is recommending that the district purchase a new 77- passenger Holland bus for the 2024-2025 school year for \$126,538.00. Details of the purchase could be found in the board packet. Mr. Klinger explained that Mr. Lichota has done some research and has found that although gas buses seat slightly less kids than diesel buses, they are cheaper and have significantly less maintenance issues, which is why he is now looking to purchase gas buses. Motion by Edmonds, support by Ulman to purchase a new Holland bus for \$126,538.00 as presented.

Mr. Klinger said that Mr. Mejeur is requesting approval for an overnight trip for the Tawas Area Varsity Hockey team from January 25, 2024 until January 26, 2024 to allow them to play in the Chelsea Showcase. The board had previously approved this overnight for January 26 until January 27, but the team received their schedule for the tournament and were scheduled to play on the 25th and 26th of January. Motion by Bruning, support by Jenkins to allow the hockey team to stay overnight from January 25, 2024 until January 26, 2024.

Mrs. Bruning said that the closed session for the attorney/client update will be moved to the end of the meeting.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Superintendent Report – Mr. Klinger said that he had received the consumer's energy rebate, which was over \$99,000.00. This money will be used to offset the overall cost of the project. He also mentioned that the end of the semester is upon us, with students having half days Wednesday and Thursday and no school on Friday. Mr. Klinger wrapped up by asking everyone to keep the Whittemore-Prescott school district in their thoughts in the wake of the tragic accident that recent occurred, claiming the lives of 2 students.

Student Representatives – Gabrielle Whetstone was at the meeting and provided an update on some of the current activities taking place within the district. She said that NHS is having another blood drive on February 15. Students Leading Students (SLS) is having a training day on February 9 in Alcona and will also be giving away merchandise at the basketball game to promote this group and advocate for substance free living. She also mentioned that the student senate has started to brainstorm for Snowcoming and already has some ideas for decorating.

Administration – Mrs. Danek said that the middle school is ranked 247 out of 689 middle schools in Michigan according to U.S. News and World Report. She stated that interviews are underway for the vacant Title I teaching position, and she has had a couple promising candidates apply. Mrs. Danek said that she will be taking the e-board to the Regional Super Connect event at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bay City on January 23. She also said that the 1st semester is coming to a close with exams later this week. Grades will be posted and finalized by the end of next week. Mr. Livingston spoke about the Michigan Challenge Grant that the school applied for and received which provided funds that were used to purchase snacks and prizes for the FAFSA night, which had a great turnout and a record number of attendees. He also mentioned that on Friday staff will be doing the rollover in Skyward and Skyward staff will be available to assist with this process, which will allow us to look forward as far as scheduling for students. Mr. Livingston said that Tawas will be working with Standish to facilitate some fundraising opportunities at the boys' basketball game on January 23, 2024 to raise funds for the victims of the accident that occurred in Whittemore-Prescott. They have discussed doing a 50/50, raffling different donated items and

doing a hat day where kids can donate to be allowed to wear a hat to school for the day. Mrs. Tiffany said that robotics is off to a great start. She said she is excited to see Math Counts back up and running, with Mrs. Jordan Hazen taking the lead. The students verse staff basketball game was a lot of fun and everyone seemed to enjoy it. Mrs. Tiffany also said that the new ELA teacher, Mrs. Ahearne, is off to a great start and was a great hire. She stated that Mrs. Lizotte and Mrs. Murphy were able to provide Christmas for 15 families and wanted to thank them for their efforts in that. Peer mediation training for 8th graders has been completed and the 7th graders will begin training soon. She said that all-star band and all state band performances are also coming up. Mrs. Tiffany also talked about a \$5,000 donation that was received for the DC trip which has given them the ability to offer scholarships to students wishing to go on the trip. She said there is one last big fundraiser, a spaghetti dinner on January 27 at the American Legion. Mr. Mejeur said that he does have interviews this week for a football coach so hopefully he will have a hiring recommendation for the next meeting. Tawas has also been offered to host softball, baseball and soccer districts this spring which is exciting. Mrs. Clouse said that they had received a \$500 grant from the Jerky Outlet to help with the Steam Night they have coming up. She also stated the Clara Bolen was ranked 228 out of 1,272 elementary schools in the state of Michigan according to U.S. News and World Report. She said there was a great turnout for the Christmas concert and she felt everything went very well. Mrs. Clouse also stated that Clara Bolen had 86 students adopted by staff to have holiday presents provided for them.

From the Board – Mrs. Edmonds congratulated the middle school and elementary school on their rankings in the state. She said the FAFSA night and the turnout for that is great to see. She also thinks it is fantastic to see our district help and support another school by doing fundraisers. Mrs. Klenow thanked the administration for getting grants and scholarships for the students. She said the peer mediation is very important and she is really glad to see it and thanked the Jerky outlet for the donation. Mrs. Ulman welcomed the new hires. She asked about the food counsel and requested an update on that. Mrs. Danek said that there has been a major overhaul to breakfast offerings and students are beginning to understand why the food is served plain and opening their eyes to the different options as far as toppings and condiments they have available to them. Mrs. Ulman said it is awesome to have kids involved in this and giving them the chance to be heard. She thanked all who are involved in the food counsel. She thanked all of the spring coaches and said she appreciates the donation that was made for the D.C. trip. Mrs. Ulman said she is grateful that we are able to do something to help the families in Whittemore Prescott. Mrs. Lentz thanked those who are retiring or have resigned. She said she appreciates Mr. Lichota's research on gas verse diesel buses. Mrs. Lentz also stated that she loves hearing from the student representatives and thanked the administrative staff for all of their hard work. Mrs. Jenkins welcomed the new hires and wished the hockey team good luck. She also stated that she thinks it is awesome to see the district help Whittemore Prescott by raising money and wished everyone luck with exams. Mr. Butzin did not have anything to add and Mrs. Bruning echoed the sentiments of other board members and welcomed the new hires. Mrs. Jenkins has finished all of the "100" level CBA courses and said that she has learned a lot from these classes, including a reminder of what she is on the board for. She said she recommends all of the classes and also stated that she loved doing the workshops together as a board and collaborating. Mrs. Bruning said that the workshop (CBA 278: Dealing with Difficult People) was really great and she loved that it gave the board a directive as far as what to take next. She said the presenter was awesome and Mrs. Klenow said she agreed.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Mr. Klinger said that Ms. Deb Macon, who taught the CBA workshop, recommended that the board form a board governance committee to develop board norms and procedures. Motion by Klenow, support by Jenkins to approve the formation of a board governance committee. Motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Bruning then appointed Klenow, Jenkins and Edmonds to the committee and scheduled a meeting of this committee on Monday, January 22, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Klenow to have a brief recess at 7:45 p.m. before going into a closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Klenow to go into a closed session to discuss legal matters with the school's attorney at 7:55 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Jenkins, support by Klenow to return to open session at 8:33 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Ulman to adjourn at 8:33 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.